

6B HST STATION AREA DEVELOPMENT

There would be great benefits to enhancing development patterns and increasing development densities near proposed HST stations. To provide maximum opportunity for station area development in accordance with the purpose and need and objectives for the HST system, the preferred HST station locations are all multi-modal hubs and are typically in traditional city centers. To further these objectives, when making decisions regarding both the final selection of station locations and the timing of station development, the Authority would consider the extent to which appropriate Station Area Plans and development principles have been adopted by local authorities.

In addition to potential benefits from minimizing land consumption needs for new growth, dense development near HST stations will concentrate activity conveniently located to stations. This would increase the utilization of the HST system, generating additional HST ridership and revenue to benefit the entire state. Reducing the land needed for new growth should reduce pressure for new development on nearby habitat areas and agricultural lands. Denser development allowances would also enhance joint development opportunities at and near the station, which in turn could increase the likelihood of private financial participation in construction related to the HST system. A dense development pattern can better support a comprehensive and extensive local transit system that can serve the local communities as well as providing access and egress to HST stations. The Authority's adopted policies will ensure that implementation of the HST in California would maximize the potential for station area development.

6B.1 General Principles for HST Station Area Development

HST station area development principles draw upon transit-oriented development (TOD) strategies that have been successfully applied to focus compact growth within walking distance of rail stations and other transit facilities. Applying TOD measures around HST stations is a strategy that works for large, dense urban areas, as well as smaller central cities and suburban areas. TOD can produce a variety of other local and regional benefits by encouraging walkable compact and infill development. Local governments would play a significant role in implementing station area development by adopting plans, policies, zoning provisions, and incentives for higher densities, and by approving a mix of urban land uses. Almost all TOD measures adopted by public agencies involve some form of overlay zoning that designates a station area for development intensification, mixed land uses, and improvements to the pedestrian environment. TOD measures are generally applied to areas within one-half mile of transit stations and this principal would be followed for HST stations.

Station area development principles that would be applied at the project-level for each HST station and the areas around the stations would include the following features:

- Higher density development in relation to the existing pattern of development in the surrounding area, along with requirements for density.
- A mix of land uses (retail, office, hotels, entertainment, residential, etc.) and mix of housing types to meet the needs of the local community should be included.
- A grid street pattern and compact pedestrian-oriented design that promotes walking, bicycle and transit access with streetscapes that include landscaping, small parks and pedestrian spaces.
- Context sensitive building design that considers the continuity of the building sizes, that coordinates the street-level and upper-level architectural detailing, roof forms, and the rhythm of windows and doors, should be provided and should include consideration of the general relationship of buildings to public spaces such as streets, plazas, other open space areas, and public parking structures.
- Limits on the amount and location of development related parking, with a preference that parking be placed in structures. TOD areas typically have reduced parking as compared to conventional parking requirements typical for retail, office and residential uses due to transit access and their walk-ability,

which would be expected for HST station area development, while sufficient train passenger parking would be essential to the system viability.

6B.2 Implementation of HST Station Area Development Guidelines

The statewide high-speed train system is likely to have more than 20 stations. The Authority has the powers necessary to oversee the construction and operation of a statewide high-speed rail system, and to purchase the land required for the infrastructure and operations of the system. The responsibility and powers needed to focus growth and station area development guidelines in the areas around high-speed stations are likely to reside primarily with local government.

The primary ways in which the Authority can help ensure that the HST system becomes an instrument for encouraging maximizing implementation of station area development principles include:

- Select station locations that are multi-modal transportation hubs with a preference for traditional city centers.
- Adopt HST station area development policies and principals that require TOD, and promote value-capture at and around station areas as a condition for selecting a HST station site.
- Encourage local governments where potential HST stations may be located to prepare and adopt Station Area Plans and amend City and County General Plans that incorporate station area development principles in the vicinity of HST stations.

1. Select Station Locations that are Multi-Modal Transportation Hubs preferably in Traditional City Centers.

HST stations in California will be multi-modal transportation hubs. To meet the Authority's adopted objectives¹, all the potential high-speed rail station locations that were selected would provide linkage with local and regional transit, airports, and highways. In particular, convenient links to other rail services (heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, and conventional intercity) will promote TOD at stations by increasing ridership and pedestrian activity at these "hub" stations. A high level of accessibility and activity at the stations can make the nearby area more attractive for additional economic activity.

As described in Section 6A of this Program EIR/EIS, the preferred station sites are all multi-modal transportation hubs that would provide links with local and regional transit, airports and highways. Most of the potential stations identified for further evaluation are located in heart of the downtown/central city area of California's major cities. By identifying preferred downtown multi-modal station sites and eliminating potential "greenfield" sites², the Authority has described a proposed HST system that meets the objectives of minimizing potential impacts on the environment and maximizing connectivity with other modes of transportation. These locations also would have the most potential to support infill development and TOD.

2. Adopt HST Station Area Development Policies that Require TOD, and Promote Value-Capture At and Around Stations as a Condition for Selecting a HST Station Site.

Through subsequent CEQA and NEPA processes, the Authority will determine where stations will be located and how many HST stations there will be. The Authority intends to encourage the adoption of transit oriented development measures and to promote value-capture at and around the locations of HST

¹ See Section 1.2.1 "Purpose of High-Speed Train System".

² Sites in rural areas with very limited or no existing infrastructure.

stations.³ The Authority has identified TOD and value-capture at and around stations sites that support and promote high-speed rail ridership as essential components of high-speed train station locations. Local government will be expected to promote TOD, and to use value capture techniques to finance and maintain station amenities and the public spaces needed to create an attractive pedestrian environment. Since the HST stations will be public gathering places, value-capture techniques should be used to enhance station designs with additional transportation or public facilities. The Authority has also adopted a policy that parking for the HST stations would be provided at market rates (no free parking). The Authority will maximize application of TOD principles during the site-specific review of proposed station locations.

The Authority has prescribed the following criteria for HST station locations:

- Each station site must have the potential to promote higher density, mixed-use, pedestrian oriented development around the station.
- As the HST project proceeds to more detailed study, local governments are expected to provide (through planning and zoning) for TOD around HST station locations.
- As the project proceeds to more detailed study, local governments are expected to finance (e.g., through value capture or other financing techniques) and to maintain the public spaces needed to support the pedestrian traffic generated by hub stations.

3. Encourage Local Governments in which Potential HST Stations Would Be Located to Prepare and Adopt Station Area Plans, Amend City and County General Plans and Encourage TOD in the Vicinity of HST Stations.

Throughout future environmental processes and the implementation of HST, the Authority will continue to work closely with the communities being considered for HST stations. There are a number of mechanisms that local governments can use to encourage higher density HST oriented development in and around potential HST station locations and minimize undesirable growth effects. These include planning measures (such as specific plans, community plans, transit village plans, regional plans, and greenbelts), development agreements, zoning overlays, and, in some cases, use of redevelopment authority.

Increased density of development in and around HST stations provides a means to increase public benefits beyond the benefits of access to the HST system itself. Such benefits could include relief from traffic congestion, improved air quality, promotion of infill development and preservation of natural resources, increased stock of affordable housing, promotion of job opportunities, reduction in energy consumption, and improved cost-effectiveness of public infrastructure. The Authority and local government working together will need to determine which mechanisms best suit each community and could be implemented to enhance the benefits possible from potential HST station development.

Most successful contemporary examples of rail-influenced urban development have been the direct products of long-term strategic planning. For example, in France, and Japan, where there has been considerable success guiding new development around HST stations, local governments typically prepare long-term plans that focus growth at each HST station area. Regional plans are also typically used to coordinate station area development with existing urban areas and reserves for parks, agriculture and natural habitat.

A useful starting point for station-area development should be the preparation of an illustrative site and phasing plan for a selected station area that is realistic from a market perspective. Then a "Station Area Plan" can be prepared which will assure the community and potential developers of a public commitment to promote compact, and efficient, pedestrian-oriented development around station-areas. Local

³ As part of the "Staff Recommendations" adopted at the January 26, 2005 Authority Board Meeting in Sacramento.

government can review the availability of land around potential station sites to achieve development that is of sufficient size to be economically viable. In addition, infrastructure improvements for station area development may require public investment, either directly or through tax increment financing. These elements along with other development incentives can appropriately be included in the Station Area Plan.

Significant growth is expected in large areas of California with or without an HST system. The proposed HST system, however, would be consistent with and promote the State's adopted smart growth principles,⁴ and should be a catalyst for wider adoption of smart growth principles in communities near HST stations. It should encourage infill development, help to protect environmental and agricultural resources by encouraging more efficient land use, and encourage efficient and compact development, along with infrastructure that provides adequate transportation and other utilities and minimizes ongoing cost to taxpayers.

The incorporation of Station Area Plans and development principles will affect the Authority's decisions regarding both the final selection of station locations and the timing of station development. The Authority would encourage the local government authority having development jurisdiction at and around potential HST stations to take the following steps:

- In partnership with the Authority, develop a Station Area Plan⁵ for all land within one-half mile of the HST pedestrian entrance that adheres to the station area development principles (described above).
- Incorporate the Station Area Plan through amendment of the City or County General Plan and Zoning.
- Use a community planning process to plan the street, pedestrian, bicycle environment, and park and open spaces, and to establish appropriate zoning adopting the station area development principles.
- Use community planning processes to develop regional plans, and conforming amendments to general plans, which would focus development in existing communities and would provide for long-term protection of farmland, habitat, and open space.

⁴ As expressed in the Wiggins Bill (AB857, 2003), and in government code 65041.1

⁵ Such a plan could take the form of a specific plan pursuant to California Government Code sections 65450-65457, or a Transit Village Development Plan pursuant to California Government Code sections 65460-65460.10, which specifies the content for such a plan, or another form as determined appropriate by local government.